

CHRISTIAN GROWTH
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"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head even, Christ;" Eph. 4:14-15.

Growth is something desirable in most every thing. New mothers are alarmed if the baby does not grow properly. We parents remember the mark on the door we used to measure the height of our kid every birthday. The farmer wants his crops to grow and the forester his trees. Growth is a very good measurement of health and progress. Spiritual growth should be a part of every Christian life, and easily seen by others. Yet our churches all have some members that have been babies for years, and continually show forth their immaturity. What things will help any believer to grow in experience and faith to be like Christ? They are not hard, but without them you will always be a baby that doesn't grow. **(1). Daily Prayer:** *"Pray without ceasing."* I Thess. 5:17. From your first prayer of accepting Christ to the present, your life should be full of prayer. Many are the trials you will face, and numerous are the decisions you must make. All our human tasks and responsibilities should be bathed in prayer. God promises to be with us, so we should call on Him many times a day, seeking His direction. The more time you spend with someone, the better you will know them. Learn to lean upon His strength and direction in every area of your life. Never be too busy to fail in talking to God. **(2). Study The Bible:** *"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby;"* I Peter 2:2. The Bible is God's

eternal book of commands, instructions, and promises, recorded forever for our benefit. You will never have solid assurance of your salvation without reading the promises of the Word. Daily reading brings daily instruction and the advice you need for victory in your life. Follow closely the dos and don'ts and conform your life to the proven principles of the Bible. You will never go wrong following the Bible. **(3). Confess Christ:** *"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven."* Matt. 10: 32&33. There is no heavenly FBI or secret service officers with God. The more you boldly speak out for Christ the more growth you will manifest. Constant witness and clear testimony will lift you to a level of service, that can do great things for God. A believer that suffers from lock jaw will never be much used by God. **(4). Get Baptized:** *"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"* Acts: 2:38. Baptism sort of puts the whip cream on your life. It tells all you are going to reject sin and walk in newness of life. This outward testimony before others will strengthen your faith, and lead to obedience and growth. **(5). Join A Good Church:** *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."* Heb. 10:25. There are many verses that command Christians to seek fellowship with each other. Jesus taught the importance of the church and our assembly for prayer, singing, and worship. All by yourself you will not see much growth. You need the example of other believers, the sermons of a good preacher; and a church that is true to the word of God in every area. Bring your tithes with you and invest in Godly works. It is a serious matter for you to repeatedly skip

church. Forget past problems or what you heard said about you and get in church and stop stunting your growth over something in the past. Nothing is a good reason to neglect your church family. You need them and they need you. Now get back in church without delay. (6). **Surrender All:** *"I beseech you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." Rom. 12:1&2.* There must be full surrender to the will of God who saved us. Lack of surrender will leave you mired in the swamp of no achievement. God must have your all or He will not use you at all. Then leave the world alone and prove to others that you are living by different rules and seeking to please the Lord in all that you do. (7). **Forsake Known Sin:** *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov. 28:13.* Covered up, secret sin, can be a sad destroyer of your growth. Remember the account of Achan who hid the wedges of gold and clothing in his tent, forgetting the order of God not to touch nor take anything in the battle? His foolish sin cost him his life and that of his family as well. You and I live under the all seeing eye of God, and trying to hide sin will always bring ruin to you and your loved ones. No matter what you have done, there is forgiveness and mercy offered by God when our sin is confessed. Remember you can hide no action from the eyes of God. Get your heart right and you will once again begin growing to be like Christ. (8). **Choose Right Friends:** *"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" Psm. 119:63.* In Prov. 2:20, we are urged to *"walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous."* The thousands that have sat under my ministry have heard me say,

"You can't run with a *skunk* and smell like a rose." This is a powerful proven fact for the young and old are influenced by what others do. Our teens yearn to copy after the dress and actions that their lost friends follow. They ruin their lives, just because it is considered "cool" or "hot" by the crowd they run with, As a Christian you need to remove yourself from the environment of immoral and reckless friends. What they do will rub off on you and destroy your walk with God and hinder your growth. (9). **Pursue Obedience:** *"We ought to obey God rather than men" Acts 5:29.* Jesus said, *If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* John 14:23. I thank God for parents who raised me to obey them and most of all the Lord in the decisions I made as a growing boy. It was further enforced big time in the military where the words "Yes Sir" always led to the best way to answer those in authority over me. Remember God is our commander in chief and we are to obey, without question, His commands. Anything else will lead to tragedy and stunt your growth and effectiveness as a believer. (10). **Wise Use Of Time:** *"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" Eph. 5:16.* And again, *"Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."* I Cor. 15:58. Do not be a waster of time. There is no good reward for the hours spent watching TV or bound to the music of this world. Remember, **Only one life twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last.** I hope you will review these stimulating growth factors, get out of the nursery, and start pressing toward a new pattern of growth and spiritual progress. Remember, *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" Phil. 4:13. Let's grow up!*